

EGYPT'S ROLE IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

The Muslim World or Islamic intercontinent stretches from the Atlantic shores of Africa to Indonesia and from Soviet Central Asia to the heart of Black Africa. It comprises a vast mosaic of cultures, languages and races which share only a common belief in the Koran: la ilaha illa 'llah Muhammad rasulu 'llah. There are no political bonds linking these lands apart from the loose bonds of the Arab League in the case of the independent Arab states. In the spiritual realm, the abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate by the Kemalists in 1924 ended any over-all spiritual authority, whatever may have been the degree of its actual influence.

The problem of how and by whom this void is to be filled is one that the Muslim World has still to solve. Saudi Arabia, because of the location within its borders of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, might seem a logical choice, but the country is too small and insignificant on the world stage and too backward to command much respect. Moreover, her brand of Islam--Wahhabism--is not viewed kindly by most other Muslims. In recent years, the emergence of Pakistan as the world's largest Muslim state, and one that explicitly was created on the basis of Islam, makes her a natural contender for leadership.

The state most eagerly and openly seeking recognition as the leader of Islamdom is Egypt, who sees herself as the logical if not rightful successor to the Muslim mantle of leadership. She points with pride to the fact that of all the Muslim countries, only she has preserved uninterruptedly her national existence. Although her status as an independent state is of recent date, she has never lost her identity as a national unity, whoever might have been her rulers at any given moment. The political entity of Egypt has always existed, whether as a province, vice-royalty, protectorate or any other form to which the vicissitudes of time subjected her. Of the glorious centers of Muslim history, only Cairo remains as a city of more than national importance; by comparison, Damascus and Baghdad are mere provincial towns. In Cairo's al-Azhar University, Egypt is the seat of an institution whose influence extends to wherever Muslims are found.

Egyptian efforts to fill the vacuum created by the Kemalistic action began in 1926 when an Islamic conference was held in Cairo to consider the perplexing problem of the caliphate. The meeting was poorly attended and completely indecisive. The idea was revived in the 1930's when King Farouk developed ambitions to become caliph. In anticipation of this added dignity, he had himself proclaimed a "sayyid," or descendant

of the Prophet, which by custom and tradition any caliph of Islam must be. In view of Farouk's known Albanian and Turkish ancestry, the claim was so patently spurious that it resulted in nothing but ridicule and derision and was soon dropped.

Efforts have been resumed with renewed vigor since the military regime took power in July 1952. Both by deed and action the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) has served notice that henceforth Egypt's horizon extends beyond the Arab countries. Gamal Abd-al-Nasser in his book, Egypt's Liberation: The Philosophy of the Revolution, states clearly that Egypt must move in three circles: the Arab World, Africa and the world of Islam.

In the Arab World, Egypt's pre-eminence has long been an accomplished fact and has become even more assured since she succeeded in eliminating the British from her territory. As the largest, most populous, richest and most economically advanced Arab country, she is the natural leader of the Arabs. This fact is reflected by her acknowledged leadership within the Arab League. Indeed, the League is largely an Egyptian creation. Following the stillborn as-Said proposals of 1943, it was Egyptian initiative which led to the formulation of the Alexandria Protocol in October 1944 and to the signing of the Arab League Pact in Cairo in March of the following year. The choice of Cairo as the League's seat and the appointment of an Egyptian, Azzam Pasha, as its first secretary-general are not without significance. Additional Egyptian influence within the League is assured by the predominance of Egyptian nationals in the League secretariat and by the fact that Egypt provides more than 40 per cent of the League's budget.

Being all relatively newly independent countries, the League's members, sparked by Egypt, have consistently supported efforts by other Arabs to throw off the shackles of colonialism. This explains their support of Yemen in its claims against British-occupied Aden, of Oman against British-controlled Muscat, and Saudi Arabia in its current dispute with Britain over the Buraimi oases. This support, it should be noted, is not only League policy but also the policy of Egypt as an individual state. Egypt and the League have also extended the policy to support of the North African areas against France and of Indonesia against the Netherlands and more recently in respect to West Irian.

Egypt's leadership of the Arabs and her determination to retain that position explain much of the dissension that

has rendered the League impotent as an effective political instrument. Egypt opposes any move which might result in the appearance of a rival, hence her strong opposition to Hashemite plans for a Fertile Crescent or Greater Syria. Similarly, her violent opposition to Iraq's participation in the Northern Tier and her vigorous efforts to prevent the adherence of any other Arab state stem not only from her neutralist leanings and desire to keep the Arab area out of the arena of great power rivalry, but also from a strong aversion to seeing any Arab state reject Egyptian leadership. Added to these factors is her resentment over Turkey's attitude toward the Israeli problem and her natural antipathy toward strengthening the position of Pakistan, her only real competitor for Islamic leadership.

In respect of Africa, Nasser states in his book:

It is not without significance, too, that our country lies in northeast Africa, overlooking the Dark Continent, wherein rages a most tumultuous struggle between white colonialists and black inhabitants for control of its unlimited resources. ...however much we might desire /to/ remain aloof from the terrible and sanguinary conflict going on there today between five million whites and 200 million Africans, /we/ cannot do so for an important and obvious reason: we are in Africa. The peoples of Africa will continue to look to us...

Implicit in these statements is a pledge of Egyptian support for all African peoples struggling to gain their freedom, and is complete justification for Egyptian efforts on behalf of Tunisian, Algerian and Moroccan aspirations, aside from the racial and religious considerations which have called forth Arab League support. Even under the monarchy Cairo had become the center of North African nationalist activity which was aided and abetted both physically and financially by the Egyptian government.

While such factors as race, religion, anti-colonialism and support of African liberation may have played a role in the case of Egyptian activity to evict the British from the Sudan, a more important consideration was the fact that in the Sudan lies the source of the waters of the Nile without which Egypt would be but a desert. National interest demands that Egypt spare no effort to secure the union of the Sudan with Egypt. Although the Sudan has recently rejected the idea of such union in favor of an independent existence, Egypt will not cease her efforts to exert a maximum influence over the new state.

The Sudan also is important to Egypt in its efforts to achieve leadership in Nasser's "third circle" or Islamdom. The borders of Islam in Africa now extend far beyond the Arab racial borders into West Africa and the heart of what has been called Black Africa. Sudanese influence, or perhaps more accurately, the influence of the Muslim University of El Fasher extends south and west into the regions of Chad and the North Cameroons. Since El Fasher is strongly influenced by al-Azhar, Egypt commands strong respect in these generally forgotten areas of Islam. Further west in Nigeria, the 12 million Muslims of that area are influenced directly by both al-Azhar and El Fasher. There is no evidence that Muslim missionary work in Central and West Africa is being sponsored and subsidized directly and officially by the Egyptian government, but it nevertheless redounds to Egypt's benefit and she is not discouraging it. Moreover, many Egyptian nationals are involved in Muslim missionary work according to the French writer, Roger Le Tourneau.

Within the Islamic intercontinent, Egypt's chief claim to leadership lies perhaps in al-Azhar University. Founded in 1170, al-Azhar has long been the fount of orthodox authority. Its Grand Council of Ulema is the closest thing to a central religious body that Islam possesses. Al-Azhar's purpose is to train ulema, imams and muftis in Islamic law and the commentaries. Its enrollment is about 15,000. Students come from every country and territory where Muslims reside. These students, who inevitably absorb some Egyptian ideas during their sojourn in Cairo, are not only excellent ambassadors of good will when they return to their homes but are also influential because al-Azhar graduates, and even those who can boast of having studied there, enjoy great prestige among Muslims of their own countries. Students are drawn not only from countries which follow the Hanafi rite, as Egypt does, but from all orthodox Muslim areas since all four orthodox schools--Hanafi, Hanbali, Maliki and Shafai--are taught at al-Azhar. In recent years al-Azhar has been training a small number of students annually specifically for missionary work in the field.

In addition to the university's influence throughout the Muslim World because of its educational role, the university's Grand Council of Ulema claims to be the highest spiritual authority for the more than 250 million Sunni Muslims, with supremacy in matters of religious traditions and re-interpretation. If this claim is not expressly recognized by every Sunni community, there is still no other authority which can dispute the claim by presenting a stronger one of its own. This situation is a potent force for Egyptian

leadership aspirations, especially when it is remembered that the rector of al-Azhar, and thus the head of the Council, is a political appointee of the Egyptian government and that the Council is, therefore, amenable to the government's will. "There has not been a single rector of al-Azhar in recent times, who has been sufficiently independent to assert his personality on current Islamic thought," states Heyworth-Dunne in his book, Religious and Political Trends in Modern Egypt.

Another source of Egyptian influence lies in Cairo's status as a center of book publishing and manuscript copying, Arab theater, music, films, recording industry and radio. The influence exerted by all these media is not confined strictly to the Arabic-speaking countries. As a result of the reverence accorded Arabic by all Muslims because of its use as the language of the holy Koran, the intellectual circles of all Muslim countries are generally acquainted with it. The Cairo Arabic-language press is read from North Africa to India while its radio broadcasts reach an even greater percentage of the Muslim World. At present Radio Cairo broadcasts regularly in Turkish, Sudanese, Persian, Indonesian, Urdu, Hindustani and Swahili in addition to Arabic, English, French, Italian, Greek and Hebrew. The influence of these broadcasts on the millions of non-Egyptian and non-Arab Muslims cannot accurately be judged but it probably is considerable.

The cultural field has also witnessed other attempts by the RCC regime to extend Egyptian influence. Youth is a case in point. An international conference of Muslim youth held in Karachi at the beginning of 1955 resulted in the establishment of permanent headquarters in Pakistan but Egypt succeeded in having the permanent secretariat installed in Cairo. On 8 July 1955, the first international camp for Muslim youth was organized at Port Said by Colonel al-Sadat, secretary-general of the Islamic Conference. Youths from Lebanon, Pakistan, Bahreyn, Iran, Indonesia and East Africa attended. In August 20 Iranian youths arrived in Egypt for a three weeks' visit as guests of the Egyptian government. Several weeks later it was announced in Cairo that al-Sadat would visit the Muslim areas of East Africa to establish schools and Islamic cultural institutions. The announcement added that cultural centers had already been organized in India, Pakistan, Indonesia and Libya. Earlier Egyptian moves along this line had been made at the Bandung Conference.

The Egyptians also have exploited the traditional Muslim hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca. In 1953 while still head of the Egyptian government, General Naguib made the hajj

which was well reported by Egyptian publicity media. Although he asked that he be considered like any other pilgrim and protested that his visit to Mecca was purely for religious reasons and without political connotations, he nevertheless used this opportunity to make a statement in Mecca calling on Muslims everywhere to unite in order to continue the crusade against the foreign occupation of Muslim territories. The following year Nasser also made the pilgrimage with due publicity.

Another aspect of the ROC program is evidenced by the travels of its members. Egyptian leaders are constantly visiting one country or another. There have been few times in the past several years when all members of the cabinet were in Cairo at the same time. Major Saleh Salim, while Minister of National Guidance, could generally be found in the Sudan or one of the Arab countries. Colonel al-Sadat has travelled extensively throughout the Muslim World since the fall of 1954 in his efforts to organize the Islamic Conference. In May 1954, Minister of Waqfs al-Baquri made a several weeks' tour of Red China. Before returning to Cairo he attended an Islamic National Conference in the Philippines and visited Indonesia and Afghanistan. In September 1955, Wing Commander Gamal Salem, the deputy premier, paid a two weeks' state visit to Karachi. On 14 November 1955, al-Baquri left Cairo for a visit to Tunisia and Morocco and on 31 December, for Liberia to represent Egypt at the inauguration of that country's new president. Deputy Premier Gamal Salem also went to Indonesia to attend the celebration of Indonesia's Liberation Day. He was accompanied by Abd-al-Rahman Taj, the rector of al-Azhar University. These personal contacts have increased Egypt's standing abroad.

The number of foreign dignitaries, principally Muslim, who are visiting Cairo, in many cases in response to a specific invitation from the Egyptian government, are increasing. In this respect Cairo has become the Washington of the Islamic intercontinent. Nehru visited Cairo several times in 1955, while President Soekarno of Indonesia arrived on 19 July 1955 for a weeks' state visit before going to Mecca to make the pilgrimage. While in Morocco al-Baquri officially invited the newly restored Sultan to visit Egypt in the near future. Afghanistan officials have similarly been invited to Cairo.

The major Egyptian bid for Muslim World leadership lies perhaps in her efforts to promote an annual Islamic Conference to be held in conjunction with the pilgrimage to Mecca. The idea is not a new one. Similar efforts were made in the past. King Ibn Saud convoked an Islamic Congress in Mecca

in 1926, but he made it clear that no temporal matters of any kind were to be discussed. Although considered a success, the congress never met again in Mecca. The Islamic Congress which met in Jerusalem in 1931 was held under different circumstances and with different terms of reference.

The Islamic Conference currently being promoted by Egypt was first discussed in 1954 during the hajj when Premier Nasser met with King Saud and Pakistani Premier Mohammed Ali and proposed that a conference of the heads of all Muslim states be held each year at the time of the hajj. Such a conference would discuss temporal rather than spiritual problems. King Saud, in contrast to the attitude taken by his father, agreed to the proposal and an executive committee was appointed to formulate plans for the conference. On 14 August 1954, shortly after his return to Cairo, Nasser announced the appointment of Colonel Anwar an-Sadat as temporary secretary-general of the annual Islamic Conference. Al-Sadat, a member of the RCC and Minister of State in the Egyptian cabinet, has since been confirmed in that post and has become the leading promoter of the idea.

The Egyptians argue that the conference, far from being an innovation, will be no more than a formal revival of a custom as old as Islam itself. According to al-Sadat, the Koran requires Muslims to gather around the holy places to give thanks to God and to confer about their problems. But though the Egyptians can find religious sanction for their idea, their purpose is clearly political and is openly admitted. Writing in al-Musawwar on 21 April 1955, Fikri Abaza, the Egyptian journalist and political commentator, declared that the conference would mark the fourth and last stage of the revolution. As originators of the idea, and having control of the administrative apparatus which will guide the conference, Egypt expects that the conference will enhance her stature as a leader of the Islamic world. The fact that the conference itself would be held in Saudi Arabia rather than in Egypt does not detract from the benefits which will accrue to Egypt.

Today, almost two years after the idea was first discussed and initially approved, the conference has yet to be realized. The reasons are obscure but the delay is not due to lack of effort on the part of al-Sadat. His endeavors have been unceasing. He has met with Muslim leaders in Cairo and abroad to discuss the conference and its problems. Between the beginning of February and the middle of April 1954, he personally visited Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Kuwait, Qatar, Pakistan, Malaya, Burma, Indonesia, India and Afghanistan for this purpose and then accompanied Nasser to Bandung to make additional contacts with leaders of the Muslim countries represented there.

In the process of al-Sadat's efforts, the terms of reference for the Islamic Conference have been somewhat changed. It is no longer viewed as a meeting solely of the heads of state of Muslim countries. According to a statement made by al-Sadat in Karachi on 8 April 1955, it is envisaged that representatives of the Muslim communities of African territories and of non-Muslim countries such as India and Burma will also participate. Later, as a result of al-Baquri's visit to Communist China, an invitation was also extended to the Chinese Muslim community. To broaden the basis of the conference and to increase popular support and demand for it, al-Sadat has announced that plans are being considered for the establishment of branches of the conference in all Muslim countries.

Although the end result of al-Sadat's labors cannot be foreseen at this time, it appears that the idea has become a firm policy of Egypt and that efforts will continue until the conference actually meets. When it does, Egypt, barring unforeseen circumstances, will undoubtedly have taken another long step forward toward achieving her goal of Muslim leadership.

The Afro-Asian Conference of 1955 afforded Nasser his first chance to play a leading role in the international scene outside the immediate confines of the Arab circle and he did not fail to grasp the opportunity. His trip to Bandung was in the nature of a triumphant procession. He stopped at several capitals en route in each of which he received a welcome which could not fail to impress upon him the increased prestige Egypt had acquired by throwing out the corrupt and discredited Farouk regime and by throwing off the last vestiges of British control. Although Nasser himself was overshadowed in Bandung by greater personalities such as Chou En-lai and Nehru, his personal bearing, tact and level-headedness clearly impressed every delegate. Nasser himself has described his role as one of "diplomatic reconnaissance." He did not try to assume the role of spokesman for the Muslim countries. He pursued a strictly Egyptian or, at most, an Arab attitude. Although favorably impressed by Chou, he nevertheless supported the ardently pro-West delegates in their resolution to condemn Communist colonialism and to link the prohibition of atomic weapons with effective international control.

From Egypt's point of view, one of the most significant acts of the conference was its resolution of support of the Arabs in their quarrel with Israel, and Nasser is credited with the principal role in engineering this resolution.

Since Islamic countries generally agree on their dislike of Israel, Nasser's success in winning the support of the non-Muslim Afro-Asian countries could not fail to increase Egypt's prestige as an Islamic leader, apart from the added prestige accruing to any country which achieves its objective in an international meeting.

Egypt's major effort at the conference along strictly Islamic lines was a proposal made by Mustafa Kamil, Egyptian representative on the conference's Cultural Committee, to organize two cultural centers to be financed by Egypt, one in Cairo and the other in Asia, and to establish an institute for lectures on Islamic sciences in the Arabic language.

Although Nasser's role and importance at Bandung were not as great as that attributed to him by his loyal Egyptian press and radio, he emerged from the conference with added personal prestige while his country's importance among the Afro-Asian nations similarly increased. Saleh Salem, then Minister of National Guidance, declared that 100 million pounds spent for propaganda in the countries represented at Bandung could not have achieved an equal advantage for Egypt.

Since the conference, Egyptian leaders have been among the most ardent advocates of continuing the Afro-Asian meeting on an annual basis. They suggest that since the first conference was held in Asia, the second should meet in Africa and they offer Cairo as the logical place, with July 1956 as an appropriate time. In the fall of 1955, Sir John Kotelawala, Ceylonese Prime Minister and one of the sponsors of the Bandung meeting, supported the idea of an annual conference. On 30 December 1955, Chinese Premier Chou En-lai endorsed Cairo as an ideal meeting place.

A major outgrowth of the Bandung Conference has been the increased friendliness between Egypt and Communist China which is significant in view of Egypt's role in the Muslim World. Chou En-lai made every effort to ingratiate himself with Nasser. Upon Nasser's arrival at Rangoon on his way to Bandung, Chou personally took the trouble to drive to the airport to greet Nasser. During the conference Chou invited Nasser to visit Red China. This was not convenient for Nasser, so Shaykh Hasan al-Baquri, Egyptian Minister of Waqfs, made the trip in his place accompanied by Mustafa Kamil, a Cairo University professor.

In China al-Baquri was given a royal welcome. During the visit, cultural and religious rather than political ties were emphasized. Al-Baquri was given the opportunity to

visit China's northwest provinces where most of China's Muslims live. At a dinner in his honor at Peking, the Chinese were careful to have present representatives of the Chinese Muslim Society and the Chinese Islamic Cultural Society. With due publicity al-Baquri presented 2,000 pounds to Chou as a present from the Egyptian Government to the Muslims of China. The Chinese assured al-Baquri that Chinese Muslims looked to Egypt for leadership and expressed the hope that al-Azhar would continue to graduate religious leaders for their community. During the visit al-Baquri initialled a draft agreement regarding the treatment of Muslims living in China. This was highly flattering to the Egyptians, for in even discussing the treatment of Chinese Muslims with an Egyptian official, China was in effect announcing that it recognized Egypt as the spiritual leader of all Muslims everywhere. Later, upon his return to Cairo, Kamil also revealed that the Chinese had agreed in principle to an Egyptian proposal to send Egyptian archeologists and professors to China to teach Arabic and Islamic sciences to Chinese Muslims. While it is doubtful that China will actually permit another power to exercise even spiritual guidance over any of her subjects, her actions will, nevertheless, buttress Egypt's bid for Muslim leadership.

China is using Egypt's Muslim feelings as part of a Communist campaign to wean her away from the West or at least to strengthen her neutralist tendencies. Following al-Baquri's visit, there has been a steady stream of Egyptian officials to China and Chinese Communist officials to Egypt. In August shortly after al-Baquri's visit, Dr. Mohammed Abu Nusayr, Minister of Trade and Industry, headed a trade mission to China, it having been agreed that each country would establish a permanent trade mission in the other's capital. At a meeting in Peking on 12 August 1955 between Nusayr and Chinese agricultural officials, the secretary-general of the Chinese Muslim Society was also present.

During his visit, al-Baquri invited Chinese Muslim leaders to visit Cairo after their pilgrimage to Mecca. The invitation was accepted and on 24 August 1955, the pilgrims, headed by the secretary of the Peking Chinese Islamic Association, who also had been a member of the Chinese delegation to Bandung, were received by Nasser in Cairo. Their visit was preceded only a few days by one of a group of pilgrims from the Soviet Union, headed by the president of the Muslim Religious Council for Central Asia, who had come to Cairo to pay their respects to the leaders of al-Azhar University--another example of the standing of that institution among all Muslims.

The desire to achieve recognition as leader of the Muslim world has not blinded RCC leaders to the realities of politics. They are practical men who must meet and solve the problems of the day in the realization that strong as may be their Islamic feelings, they are first of all Egyptians and must, therefore, view affairs in the light of Egyptian interests first, as evidenced by the following: Egypt has long been a center of activity for North African nationalist independence efforts. The Egyptian government, motivated by feelings of racial and religious fraternity and by her aversion to colonialism and imperialism wherever it may exist, has officially championed the claims of North African peoples. Nevertheless, in November 1955, Egypt suddenly called off its violent press and radio attacks against French policy in North Africa following a meeting between Nasser and French Ambassador Count Armand de Chayla on 24 November. In return for the Egyptian action France announced that it would resume the shipment of arms to Egypt. Thus the Egyptian Government felt it necessary to sacrifice or at least modify its stand on some of its major foreign policy principles for the sake of immediate national interests.

Cyprus is another case in point. On that disturbed island there is a minority of roughly 80,000 Muslim Turks as against a majority of 420,000 Orthodox Christian Greeks. Muslim solidarity would seem to require Egypt to support the stand of the Muslim minority. However, as a result of Egypt's dislike of British colonialism and desire to see all colonial populations granted self-determination, and of her deep antipathy toward Turkey, Egypt has chosen to support Greek enosis claims.

In striking contrast to the Cypriot situation, Egypt strongly protested British withdrawal from the Somali area. On February 28, 1955, the British Government announced that it was ceding to Ethiopia 25,000 square miles of southern British Somaliland. In June of that year, the Egyptian Government announced that it had agreed to sponsor a petition to the United Nations General Assembly on behalf of the people of the affected Somali area, protesting this "illegal" action. The Egyptians argue that the cession was a clear violation of the terms of the original protectorate treaties and that the people in the areas involved preferred to remain under British rule rather than come under the rule of Ethiopia. It is not clear whether the Somali delegation which appeared in Cairo was truly representative or was the result of Egyptian maneuvering; however, here is found the strange spectacle of Egyptian praise for British colonial rule coupled with a denunciation of the renunciation of that rule. Egyptian dislike for and distrust of Ethiopia, which she suspects of attempting to supplant Egyptian influence in the Sudan, explain the Egyptian position in this case. The Cairo radio on more than one occasion has denounced alleged Ethiopian activities in the Sudan.

Egypt does not confuse leadership of the Muslim World with leadership of an Islamic bloc. Suggestions made from time to time in the Arab League's Political Committee that the League should be converted into an Islamic League have been viewed coldly by Egypt. When asked if Egypt contemplated joining an Islamic bloc, Nasser replied emphatically that there was no such thing as an Islamic bloc, although being a Muslim country Egypt naturally was eager to forge closer relations with other Islamic countries. Egypt, like many other Muslim countries, sees greater disadvantages than advantages in any Islamic bloc or Muslim Union. Such a bloc could easily endanger the rights currently enjoyed by Muslims living in non-Muslim countries, and might well split the ever more potentially powerful Arab-Asian bloc over some issue like Kashmir, involving a Muslim state and a non-Muslim member of the Arab-Asian bloc.

Egypt is not without a rival in its drive for Muslim leadership. Since its creation in August 1947, Pakistan has been the world's largest Muslim nation and in the eyes of many Muslims is entitled to the leadership of the Muslim Middle East if not of the entire Islamic World. Pakistan appears willing to play the role and in recent years has been the principal center of Pan-Islamic movements. In 1949 Karachi was the scene of the World Moslem Conference (al-Mutamar al-Alam al-Islam), which was repeated in 1951 and 1952. Pakistan has also taken the lead in establishing an International Islamic Economic Organization. Although there is no direct evidence, it is possible that al-Sadat's Islamic Conference scheme is partly an Egyptian attempt to offset the prestige gained by Pakistan as a result of the Karachi meetings.

In 1952 Karachi was also the scene of two ulema conferences. The first, in February, was sponsored by the Jamaa-e-Ulema-e-Islam, the governing organ of Pakistani ulema, and was convened to discuss means of renovating Islamic institutions and of reuniting Sunnis and Shias to obtain the religious unity of Islam. The leading personality at the meeting was Haj Amin al-Husayhi, former Grand Mufti of Jerusalem. The conference organized a Congress of Muslim Ulema (al-Mutamar al-Ulema al-Muslimun) whose activity is largely concentrated in Pakistan but which has affiliated bodies in Iran, Iraq, Egypt and Yemen. The second conference held later in the year organized a Congress of Ulema of the Islam World (al-Mutamar al-Ulema al-Alam al-Islami) with the announced aim of exerting pressure on Muslim governments to secure the prohibition of cinemas, tobacco, alcohol and Christian schools as well as the strict observance of the Koran in all respects.

These two conferences, though limited in scope, serve nevertheless to counterbalance Egyptian efforts. Muslim religious leaders who are notoriously conservative are not likely to view with equanimity and approval the pronounced secular approach of the Egyptian government to most problems, particularly the recent announcement of the integration of the Shari'a courts into the regular Egyptian court system. On the other hand, they must perforce approve of Pakistan's avowed aim to base its government and constitution on the principles of Islam.

Egypt also faces Pakistani rivalry in her efforts to extend her influence in Black Africa. The most active Muslim missionary work in both East and West Africa, as well as throughout Europe, America and the Far East, is today being carried on by the Ahmadiya sect which has its origin and headquarters in Pakistan.

This Egyptian-Pakistani rivalry is reflected in the international political scene. Egypt's lack of enthusiasm for Pakistan's claims to Kashmir and her increasingly friendly relations with India are probably the result of her desire to minimize Pakistan's influence. The same considerations may explain in part Egypt's hostility to the Baghdad Pact. Similar feelings on the part of Pakistan towards Egypt explain why King Saud of Saudi Arabia was officially accepted in May 1955 to mediate a dispute between Afghanistan and Pakistan, even though Egypt was the first to offer her good offices and had already officially announced that Nasser's offer of mediation had been accepted by both countries.

Although Egypt is making a bid for leadership of the Islamic World, this long-range objective continues to be subordinated to her immediate national interests, which are primarily predicated upon Egyptian leadership of the Arab World. While the RCC regime has greatly increased Egypt's prestige in the Arab World, Egyptian leadership of the Islamic World remains far from realization.

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